

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1259, VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST ACT OF 2017; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1367, IMPROVING AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO HIRE AND RETAIN PHYSICIANS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1181, VETERANS 2ND AMENDMENT PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BUCK from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-39) on the resolution (H. Res. 198) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1259) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1367) to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1181) to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the conditions under which certain persons may be treated as adjudicated mentally incompetent for certain purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

NATIONAL K9 VETERANS DAY

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, this week, we recognized National K9 Veterans Day. It was on March 13, 1942, that the U.S. Army K9 Corps was officially formed, although dogs have had a role in our military ever since our country's founding. We not only honor military dogs, but also police dogs, customs dogs, border patrol dogs, and other working dogs that work to protect our communities.

These dogs provide an incredible service to our brave men and women overseas. They are responsible for saving lives and preventing injuries, sometimes at their own expense.

Many of our servicemembers form very strong bonds with these loyal companions. That is why I authored the Military Working Dog Military Retirement Act and was proud to see it pass with overwhelming bipartisan support last Congress. This new law guarantees that service dogs are returned and retired to the United States after serving overseas. Previously, military members were often forced to spend their own money to bring these animals home.

Mr. Speaker, let us remember and honor these four-legged heroes. They are a valuable component of protecting Americans through their courage and their loyalty.

NOAA FUNDING

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the mission of NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, now under attack by the Trump administration.

An assault on NOAA, Mr. Speaker, is an assault on science. NOAA is a data-driven organization with proven research in the public interest. NOAA defends our coasts from the surges we have seen from Sandy, Irene, and other storms. NOAA's satellites keep watch day and night, providing up-to-the-second data to farmers, forecasters, and fishermen.

Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the Trump administration's denial of climate damage, but I do not understand it. Defunding NOAA, as the President's budget purportedly does, does not make our climate problems simply go away. The mission of NOAA isn't just about our environment. American businesses rely on its data every day to give them an economic advantage. After all, there is a reason NOAA is in the Department of Commerce to begin with.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER CONGRESSMAN JOHN WOLD

(Ms. CHENEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend and former Member of this House, John Wold, of Casper, Wyoming, who passed away on February 19. Congressman Wold was a member of the Greatest Generation serving as a naval engineer during World War II. He also served Wyoming in our State legislature and as our Member of Congress. He was a leader and pioneer in the energy field, and he made numerous contributions, along with his incomparable wife, Jane, to our civic life and as a philanthropist.

I knew John my whole life. The friendship between our families goes back even farther. John was the oldest living former Member of Congress, and I was honored to receive his advice and counsel over the years.

I will never forget attending his 100th birthday this past summer in Casper and seeing the joy it brought him to be surrounded by so many of his wonderful children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

We will miss him, but the impact Congressman Wold had on our State and our Nation and the legacy of leadership and honor he leaves behind will continue to be an inspiration for generations to come.

SOUTH SUDAN

(Ms. BASS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, last month, the U.N. declared a famine in parts of South Sudan. As I rise today, more than 100,000 men, women, and children there are facing immediate starvation. Arguably, this was an avoidable crisis.

Internal conflicts have worsened the dire living conditions for the people of South Sudan, and the government of the Republic of South Sudan must live up to its promise and ensure access to the most vulnerable communities by humanitarian organizations. According to recent estimates, without immediate action, an additional 5.5 million people living in South Sudan will experience famine.

Although we haven't yet seen the President's budget, it is reported that there is a 37 percent decrease in foreign aid. This could include severe cuts to humanitarian funding.

In this regard, I introduced H. Res. 187 in support of the efforts by USAID and other providers of humanitarian assistance in the international community. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bipartisan resolution, and, by doing so, begin an end to this crisis.

CONGRATULATING THERESA BRYANT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Theresa Bryant, who is West Forsyth High School's 2016-2017 Teacher of the Year.

This first-generation college graduate, Kiwanis member, and Key Club adviser has worked at West Forsyth in Clemmons since 2000, where she teaches sophomore English and Shakespeare as an elective.

Theresa's proudest moment in the field of education is her role in the creation of the Shakespeare elective class. After an educational opportunity at the Globe Theatre in London, she worked with a colleague to create an intensive curriculum covering eight plays. The class has brought the words of the Bard to more than 4,000 students at West Forsyth, as well as four other schools in the district.

Theresa is known for her dedication to her students and making her lessons relevant to their different learning styles so everyone can understand the material.

We are lucky to have a teacher of her caliber serving students in North Carolina's Fifth District.

□ 2000

SOMEBODY ELSE'S BABIES

(Mr. SWALWELL of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)